

WISHA REGIONAL DIRECTIVE

Department of Labor and Industries

Division of Occupational Safety and Health

7.07 Powered Industrial Trucks Used to Load and Unload

Date Issued: August 11, 2006

I. Background

WAC 296-863-40050 requires when trucks and trailers are being loaded or unloaded with a powered industrial truck (PIT), the truck or trailer must be secured to prevent movement by the chocking or blocking of the wheels, or with a mechanical device that secures the truck or trailer to the loading dock. The primary purpose of chocking or blocking the wheels is to prevent the truck or trailer from moving away from the loading dock from the inertia created by the heavy PITs. The PIT may enter at a fairly high rate of speed; and when the operator hits the brakes, it could cause the trailer to creep away from the dock.

The definition PIT is very broad and includes: fork trucks, forklifts, tractors, motorized hand trucks, powered pallet jacks and other specialized industrial trucks. Each one of these PITs has different characteristics, and regional staff and employers have asked when it is appropriate to cite an employer for not chocking or blocking the wheels of a truck or trailer being loaded by a PIT.

II. Scope and Application

This WISHA Regional Directive (WRD), which remains in effect indefinitely, applies to all DOSH enforcement and consultation activities involving WAC 296-863-40050, loading or unloading highway trucks with PITs. This WRD replaces all previous guidance on the issue whether formal or informal and replaces, but does not substantively change, WRD 7.07, issued May 17, 2005, which is hereby rescinded.

III. Interpretive Guidance

When an employer is using a walk-behind motorized hand truck or powered pallet jack to load or unload a truck and trailer, enforcement and consultation staff must consider it a *de minimis* violation of the wheel chocking requirement and not issue a citation.

PITs that an operator rides on are much heavier than the walk-behind motorized hand truck or powered pallet jack and therefore creates a hazard to the operator loading or unloading trucks.

When trucks or trailers are being loaded or unloaded with a PIT that an operator rides, enforcement and consultation staff must ensure that the employer has adequately secured the truck or trailer with wheel chocks or blocks. If the employer has not ensured that the truck or trailer is adequately secured, a citation of Chapter 296-863-40050 WAC must be issued.

Approved: _____
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